Party of Lies by brodie-wan

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Summary: Decades have past since the Demogorgon was destroyed and Gate to the Upside Down was closed. The party is divided. They have not spoken to each other in years. The tragedy of the Fall of 1989 looms large as elderly men and women seek answers as well as revenge in the small town of Hawkins, Indiana. Is reconciliation possible or does deception and distrust run too deep?

Party of Lies

A/N: Cabin Fever is on hiatus. I'm not sure I fluffy Mileven in me. This story will be my focus for a while. It will be multi-chapter. It will be angsty and dramatic. But hopefully in a compelling way. I'm not sure how often the posts will come but I am going to try and post consistently to keep you on the hook. I hope you enjoy it. If you do, please don't hesitate to drop a review to let me know I'm doing something right.

Party of Lies

Chapter 1

Wind battered the cabin from the outside birthing insistent creaks and groans from the long standing structure. Drifts and unrelenting snowfall encroached on the windows and door. Inside, wrapped in a quilt, near the wood stove, was an aged woman rocking and repeating an unforgettable mantra: "Friends don't lie. Friends don't lie. Friends don't lie."

A man stood in the small kitchen, and as the old woman looked over her shoulder, she momentarily caught a glimpse of her dad, but it was gone almost as soon as it appeared. The man was not her dad, but her husband, and the thing which had brought them them both back to Hawkins, back to this cabin, was something neither of them thought would ever happen again.

"El," Mike Wheeler said, pleading. "You have to stop this. What's done is done. I don't want you torturing yourself over it."

Jane Ellen Wheeler kept rocking, pulling the quilt more tightly around her shoulders. She shook her head and seemed to revert before his eyes to to frightened twelve year old girl her met in the forest fifty years before. He frowned. Not only did it sadden him to see his wife in this condition, but he knew he was partly responsible for it.

"What did we do, Mike?" she croaked. "How could we be so selfish. Are our lives so much more important?"

He moved from the kitchen to her side by the wood stove. El had always been a rock, the backbone of the party once she joined. But she had also been a truth teller. To a fault. Mike could also thank himself for that one. He had planted the maxim that 'friends don't lie' and it had been integrated into her core from the moment he said it. She applied it to the whole 'family' (those who had fought in and against the Upside Down) even if they were not a pure as she. Lies have many shades, but to El, it was only black and white. You were either telling the truth or you weren't and she wouldn't stand for the latter.

"No," he assured her. "Our lives are no more important."

"You lied to him, Mike," she whispered, turning to meet his eyes, rimmed with wrinkles of age. "You know what he'll do, even it kills him."

Mike's eyes hardened and his lips thinned. "He lied first, El. You remember that, right? You remember the cost of that lie, don't you?"

He hated doing this to her; making her remember. It was more than Hawkins Lab. More than the Mind Flayer. It was an element of Upside Down so insidious that The Party had been divided. More than that, the Party had been at war with each other since 1989. Perhaps war was a strong word. None the less there was active hostilty among the party; those who remained.

Dustin had never left Hawkins. Of all things, he became a pediatric dentist. He had a long, successful practice. He had not spoken to Mike in twenty-five years.

Lucas and Max married. Divorced, and, for God knows what reason, married again. They are still married. Lucas retired from the Army in 2039, A Lt Colonel. He has not spoken to Mike in thirty-five years.

Will still lives in his mother's house. Alone. He is all but a hermit. He never married. Zombie Boy was one thing. Exercising the Shadow Monster was another. Hopper and Joyce were the last straw. What happened to them broke Will to pieces and tore the Party asunder.

El had given up on revenge or justice or whatever long ago. Mike had

not been as generous or, at the very least, not as willing to forgive. It was Hopper. It was Joyce. It was unforgivable.

TBC